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THE LESSON OF THE NAVAL REVIEW.

BY THE HON. HILARY A. HERBERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

THE grand stand upon which President Cleveland stood when he opened the Columbian Exposition at Chicago fronts towards the great lake which is there fringed by a façade crowned with statuary. Behind the President, and to the right and the left of him, stood buildings which in their splendor and beauty seemed the work of some great magician. Looking upon these and then upon the sea of happy and expectant faces that greeted him, Mr. Cleveland said :

“ We have built these splendid edifices, but we have also built the magnificent fabric of a popular government, whose grand proportions are seen throughout the world. We have made and here gather together objects of use and beauty, the products of American skill and invention ; but we have also made men who rule themselves. It is an exalted mission in which we and our guests from other lands are engaged, as we coöperate in the inauguration of an enterprise devoted to human enlightenment, and in the undertaking we here enter upon we exemplify in the noblest sense the brotherhood of nations.”

There is not a phase of the naval display which, at the water's edge of our country, formed so fitting a prelude to the opening ceremonies of the great exposition that does not inspire such thoughts. Certainly no scene was more beautiful, and none more suggestive than that which greeted the eyes of those on board the “ Dolphin ” as she steamed into Hampton Roads on the morning of

the 22d of April. The air was soft, and the sun shone brightly, as the little ship ploughed her way into these historic waters. Within this generation there was fought here the famous battle between the "Merrimac" and the "Monitor." It was that battle which had put the work-shops of the world to work at ships and guns of new device, creating a revolution in naval architecture, the latest results of which were the splendid men-of-war that now lay so peacefully side by side in the famous roadstead.

The "Merrimac," the Confederacy, and the great civil war had passed into history, the Union of the States had been preserved and strengthened, the sting of defeat and the shouts of victory had been forgotten, and now those who had ranged themselves on the side of the Confederacy were vying with those who had fought for the Union in doing honor to the flag that floated over the "Dolphin." A few miles further on, at the Norfolk Navy Yard, lay the U. S. S. "Constellation," successor to the old ship that, in 1799, had fought to death the French ship "L'Insurgente." Now there lay here four beautiful men-of-war floating the tri-color and joining in honors to the American flag.

In 1807 there had sailed out of this roadstead for the Mediterranean the U. S. S. "Chesapeake." When only a few miles beyond the capes she was overtaken by the British ship "Leopard." A demand was made for three men claimed as deserters from a British vessel, and, upon a refusal by the American, the English ship opened a furious fire upon the "Chesapeake," which, being unprepared for the attack, was compelled to surrender. This outrageous act of the British officer, though at first disavowed by his government, was a prime cause in rousing that feeling of indignation which, eventually, in 1812, compelled the President of the United States to declare war against Great Britain. In singular contrast with the conduct of the commander of the "Leopard," here now, in these waters where that ship had watched for the departure of the "Chesapeake," the commander of the British fleet, Sir John Hopkins, was distinguishing himself by the urbanity and zeal with which he labored for the success of the great International Review.

Here, in this beautiful sheet of water, lay at anchor men-of-war representing nine nations, six of them, Great Britain, Spain, Italy, Russia, the Netherlands and Germany, monarchical in form. As the "Dolphin" hove in sight there was not a cloud in the sky, and each

of the thirty war-ships in view seemed hung with rainbows of many colors. They were all dressed in the gay colors of Italy in honor of the twenty-fifth anniversary of King Humbert's marriage. Amid the thousands of American citizens who lined those shores and manned ships in that harbor there was not one who was not intensely devoted to republican government, yet it is probably true that there was not one among them all who criticised the bestowal of these honors upon a king. All felt that this gathering typified what was well called by Mr. Cleveland the "brotherhood of nations." To our officers and sailors these honors were not, perhaps, as striking, because they were not as novel, as to the civilians who had never witnessed such a scene. There is a code of honor and of courtesy prevailing among naval officers of all flags that is the happy growth of centuries. It is civilizing, refining, and has a constant tendency, when properly observed, to promote peace and good-will among the nations of the earth. This code the American naval officer is happily fitted to practise by the training he receives at Annapolis. A nation's navy is the right arm of its diplomacy. There is a constant call upon the naval officer to practise the amenities of life in intercourse with men of other nations. He is often obliged, by the duties of his position, to receive and to entertain, not only naval officers, but often distinguished civilians. The British Government furnishes certain of its fleet commanders an entertainment fund. One who is familiar with the exigencies which make such frequent demands upon our fleet commanders, cannot but regret that the United States has not some similar provision of law. Such an appropriation, however, should always be carefully restricted.

The dinners given on board the American ships at the Rendezvous and the Review were paid for by the Government. Congress appropriated funds for them, because the foreign ships were the invited guests of the nation, and our officers could not afford, from their own private means, to entertain on so large a scale.

The boat races, and friendly musical contests, that formed such a pleasant feature of the gathering at Hampton Roads, were also not entirely without precedent. Neither was there anything especially uncommon in the number of ships that were assembled. In numbers the combined fleets did not compare with the Spanish Armada, nor with the vessels that fought at Trafalgar,

nor even with the French fleet of more than one hundred modern vessels that assembled for practise off Cherbourg and Brest in 1891, nor with the great British fleets that have more than once in later years manœuvred off the coast of England. Nor is this the first occasion upon which the ships of different nations have assembled to celebrate a great event. Sixty ships of war, all told, belonging to several nations, assembled at Barcelona at the opening of the exposition in 1888, sixteen of these being battle-ships; and at the Columbus celebration in Genoa, in September last, there were thirty-nine men-of-war, including thirteen battle-ships. But at Barcelona and Genoa there was no concert of action, no common programme, no commander whose directions or requests were followed. Each squadron was there to lend its presence and that was all.

The combined fleets of nine nations, the Brazilians having come in and the Spaniards having left with their caravels for New York on Sunday, set sail from Hampton Roads on Monday, the 24th of April, at about 10 o'clock. The "Dolphin" did not take a place in the line but steamed alongside for a time, and at 12 o'clock fell back half way down the line, signalled to the fleet "good-by and a pleasant voyage," and then steamed on ahead. When half a mile in advance Captain Buckingham, for a better view of the fleet, turned the head of the little vessel gradually across the lines made by the advancing columns, and then was witnessed from her decks a scene that has no parallel in history. There were two lines of vessels, almost perfect, the starboard column headed by the English ship "Blake," followed by the ships of seven other foreign countries; the port column headed by the "Philadelphia" and composed of thirteen American vessels. All were steaming at the prescribed rate, under command, by courtesy, of the American Rear-Admiral Gherardi. No question of rank or precedence and no desire to be independent marred the programme. It was an illustration of "brotherhood of nations." So of the Review in New York harbor on the 27th. Each ship took its prescribed place, manned its yards and saluted the President as he passed by.

A little over seventy years ago, so hostile was the feeling on the Continent of Europe to republican government that Russia, Prussia and Austria entered jointly into a project, which happily proved futile, to aid Spain in reasserting her dominion over cer-

tain of her revolted colonies in America, solely because they had established over themselves governments republican in form. How suggestive it was that Russia and Germany (comprising Prussia) had now sent their ships to these waters to join with the ships of republican France, and of South American republics (all to act under the command of an American Admiral), in doing honor to him who had discovered the continent which is now the home of republics. Especially noticeable and memorable now was the blue cross of Russia. Russia is the most absolute of monarchies, yet no flag was more welcome than hers. America will never forget that, in the trying time when the United States seemed about to be rent in twain by civil war, the great Muscovite Empire was the steadfast friend of the Union.

But the crowning, and, in many respects, the most interesting feature of the whole was the land parade of the sailors on the 28th of April in the streets of New York. When the proposition to have such a parade was first mentioned the naval officers consulted received it with, to say the least, doubts and misgivings. Our naval officers are, fortunately, conservative; they have been trained to stand *supra antiquas vias*, and they feared that there would be failure in an attempt to get so many foreign troops to land, with arms in their hands, on American soil. No such thing had ever been tried or thought of. But when it was decided upon, the officers who had doubted made it a success. And the shore parade, while it was the most significant act of good will to the American people and American institutions, was also the crowning lesson of the Review. The crowds who looked on, no doubt, concurred with patriotic unanimity in the idea that the Yankee sailor was entitled to the prize, but every thoughtful observer was impressed with the idea that if our men should ever come to blows with their friends who were behind them in line, they could never hope to win except with a fair supply of ships and guns. The stalwart Russians, with their sturdy tramp; the business-looking Britons, keeping step to "God Save the Queen;" the quick-stepping Frenchmen; the Germans, with their natty uniforms; the Italians, and, indeed, all the detachments of the unique body of men were drilled and disciplined into fighting machines. Never was such a sight witnessed before as the sailors of nine different nations marching together, and never was anything better calculated to impress upon those who saw

them the lesson that the American sailor can keep his place upon the seas only when his Government is behind him.

The most pleasing and singular feature of this parade was to see Russians and Englishmen, who have for years been watching each other with jealous eyes over the mountain ranges that divide their Eastern possessions, marching one after another, and Germans and Frenchmen, who are sworn enemies at home, following each other with friendly footsteps on American soil. Italy and Germany are said to be in league with Austria against Russia and France, and here, in the streets of New York, Italy, France, Germany and Russia were all in friendly competition for the favor of bystanders. How naturally comes the thought that the United States, which is now leading all the civilized world in the direction of free institutions, is to lead in that path that shall bring the people of the earth to universal peace. In that direction our past history points us. England, though our mother country, was long our bitterest foe. For years after the Revolution she refused to make a treaty consummating the results of the War of Independence, and she was still smarting under the loss of her colonies when her persistent assaults on our rights goaded us into the War of 1812. Great Britain never formally renounced the right of search, on account of the claim of which the War of 1812 was fought, until 1858. But the two countries have made peace at last. Mutual good will and respect have been testified in many ways, and never more significantly than at the naval review. In the waters of New York, the same in which so many thousands of American prisoners died in British prison ships during the Revolution, Sir John Hopkins, the British Admiral, flashed out on the night of the 27th of April, 1893, the figure of George Washington, a more striking act of amity even than the reverential visit paid some years ago by Lord Coleridge, the Chief Justice of England, to the tomb at Mount Vernon. The most substantial proof that there is to be enduring peace between us is furnished by the arbitration between the two countries of the Alabama claims in 1872, of the Fisheries question at a later date, and of the Fur Seal question now being discussed at Paris. Arbitration has become the mode of settling disputes between Great Britain and the United States. It is fondly hoped that we will adhere to this method, and that in the near future the examples set by the two leading countries of the world may be followed by other nations.

When it shall become common among nations to substitute international tribunals for the arbitrament of the sword, the philanthropist may look forward with hope for the coming of the time bodied forth in that dream of the poet—

“When the war-drum throbbed no longer and the battle-flags were furled
In the Parliament of Man—the Federation of the world.”

That happy time, however, is yet in the far distant future. Dreamers have been for years predicting its speedy coming, but the world's bloody record of battles in this nineteenth century warns all practical men that its realization can be anticipated only from the refining influences of generations yet to be. It is undoubtedly the mission of our Government to lead in that direction. The Geneva arbitration was the first step. That was followed by the commissions to arbitrate the fisheries and fur seal questions, and now by the international review which has presented the remarkable spectacle of the sailors of many nations, armed to the teeth against each other at home, coming together upon American soil to celebrate in a manner never before witnessed the victories of peace achieved by the freest people in the world. Our country, in this great onward march of the world, is in the lead. She must keep her place, and to do so her people must remember that the Geneva arbitration was achieved only after the terrific battles of our civil war had demonstrated to the world the fighting capacity of our citizen soldiery, when the fortunate termination of that war had left us one great people, and when the American navy, suddenly improvised upon new lines to meet the exigencies of that war, though crude and clumsy in many respects, was believed to be the most powerful in the world. The real Quaker who will submit to insult rather than resent it by violence is not a successful peacemaker among men. Neither can a nation which adopts a Quaker policy, however great it may be in natural resources, expect in this age of the world that its international disputes shall be arbitrated by international tribunals, or hope to keep the lead in the great work of bringing about the “brotherhood of nations.” If America would keep her own peace with all the nations of the earth and maintain her place in the vanguard of civilization she must be at all times prepared for war. This is the lesson of history emphasized by the *Rendezvous* and the *Review*.

HILARY A. HERBERT.